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Democratic Development in Perspective

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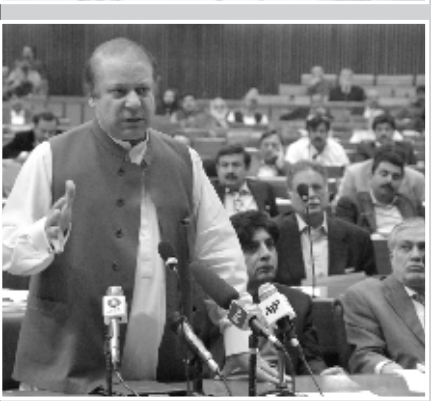

Democratic Development in Perspective

PILDAT
Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development And Transparency

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PREFACE

The General Election of May 2013 marked a significant development for Pakistan's democracy. The first successful transition from one democratically elected civilian Government under a civilian democratically elected President, to another took place. Although it was a cause for much optimism amongst the proponents of democracy, it was also received with tempered caution considering Pakistan's frequent, historic subjection to military coups.

PILDAT, which has been assessing the quality of democracy in Pakistan since 2011, wanted to include a paper, as part of its democracy assessment exercise, which gave a comparative assessment of the quality of democracy especially from the perspective of stages of democratic transition and where exactly Pakistan falls in its journey towards becoming a mature democracy.

This was of interest not only because of Pakistan's status as a democracy *in transition* due to its authoritarian past but also because trajectories adopted by different countries in the path to democratization have not been the same. A comparative assessment was therefore bound to result in conclusions useful not only to chart Pakistan's democratic progress but also of other countries around world.

In this PILDAT paper, authored by **Dr. Andrew Blick**, Lecturer in Politics and Contemporary History at King's College London, with years of experience in assessing the quality of democracy across nations, the author dilates not only upon the historic waves of democratization across the world, but also discusses the various factors that might facilitate or impede a country's democratic journey. These include the socio-economic environment, the country's experience with imperialism, the role of religion, the role of the military, etc.

Dr. Blick also expounds upon the usage of the IIDEA framework for assessment of democracy in Pakistan as carried out by PILDAT and the lessons that can be garnered through it. He concludes by making recommendations that can be used to strengthen democracy not only in Pakistan but also in fledgling democracies across the world.

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Disclaimer

The views expressed in this paper belong to the author and do not necessarily represent the views of PILDAT or the views of DANIDA, Government of Denmark.

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Since 2010 he has been Research Fellow to the first ever Parliamentary inquiry into the possibility of introducing a written constitution for the UK. During 1999, he was an administrative assistant in the office of the UK Prime Minister, 10 Downing Street.

He has written numerous books, pamphlets and articles, including Beyond Magna Carta: A Constitution for the United Kingdom (Oxford, Hart, forthcoming 2015).

The Assessment Framework and its Value

Democratic development is a perpetual project. An overview of the voluminous literature on the theme of democratization could create a misleading impression. It tends to portray democracy in binary terms: a state either *is* or *is not* democratic. Transition therefore involves passing from one condition to the other. From this perspective, the objective is to secure passage from non-democracy to democracy, and guard against subsequent reversion.

A marginally more sophisticated approach is to allow for the concept of semi-democratic societies, alongside those that are fully democratic and those that are completely devoid of it. These outlooks have numerous flaws (though the body of work containing them is of immense value, some of which is extracted here).

For those of us engaged in promoting democratic improvement through assessment of its performance, there are two immediate problems. We risk a sense of despondency and futility in a society deemed undemocratic, and self-satisfaction and complacency in one classified as democratic. If in a halfway house, supposed semi-democracy, we may suffer confusion about how and why we found ourselves in such a condition, and how to pass through it to democracy, and avoid travelling in the opposite direction to non-democracy. The Quality of Democracy assessment framework as promoted by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IIDEA) offers a form of analysis that allows us to circumvent these blockages.

Democratic development is a perpetual project. An overview of the voluminous literature on the theme of democratization could create a misleading impression. It tends to portray democracy in binary terms: a state either is or is not democratic

Among its insights, it presents democracy as a nest of different but mutually supportive components. Democracy is the sum of many different parts, any one of which can be more or less satisfactory at any given time. We can assess democratic performance through considering the widest possible range of data, both qualitative and quantitative, across a broad span of the qualities that make up democracy. They cover the features most directly associated with democracy in the popular mind, such as elections, accountability of public institutions, and parties; and other concepts that may on the surface appear more tangential but are nonetheless equally important, including the rule of law, citizenship, and economic and social rights. At the heart of this methodology, binding it together is a concept of democracy as the combination of popular control and political equality.[1]

Using this framework, we can consider performance in a nuanced way, both over time within a given state, and in international comparative perspective. Rather than crudely describing a country as democratic or non-democratic, or even placing it on a single scale, we can consider how well it is performing in a multitude of areas. Valuable – and possibly counterintuitive – insights become possible.

I have spent many years applying the framework to the United Kingdom (UK), where it was first developed in the 1990s. The UK enjoys an

1. For an overview of the methodology and the philosophical rationale underpinning it, see: David Beetham, Edzia Carvahlho, Todd Landman and Stuart Weir, *Assessing the Quality of Democracy: A Practical Guide* (Stockholm, International IDEA, 2008).

international reputation as an early leader in the historic development of democracy (or at least some of its systemic building blocks), and there is certainly a tendency within the UK for self-congratulation on this count. Yet what became the Quality of Democracy framework was developed precisely because of concerns about democratic malaise in the UK, and it throws up a variety of issues when applied to the country in which it originated.

For instance, the UK is unusual internationally for its lack of a written Constitution. This absence creates various problems. It entails a lack of transparency, compromises the degree of popular ownership of Constitutional arrangements, and creates problems for the protection of human rights.

Alongside these longstanding comparative deficiencies, the Framework reveals problems that have been worsening in recent times. In particular, there is growing disagreement around key features of UK democracy, such as provisions for the governance of England, the largest sub-component of the UK.

Increasingly intense disputes also surround the issues of UK membership of the European Union, and UK participation in the European Convention on Human Rights. The Scottish independence movement has also made rapid progress in recent years, calling into question the future of the UK state.[2]

The lesson from the UK is that no assumptions should be made about democratic superiority. The picture is complex, and always changing. Equally, in the case of Pakistan, it is apparent that a story need not be wholly bleak. Successive PILDAT assessments reveal an overall, though not uniform, upward trend in the quality of democracy over time.[3] Particular areas of relative strength involve the inclusiveness and impartiality of Constitutional Amendment processes, the freedom of political parties, the scope of the voluntary sector, and adherence to international law and support for the United Nations.

At the same time, the purpose of these exercises is not to promote relativism. Clearly, though none are perfect, some states are more satisfactory in their overall democratic performance than others. While it is vital to identify positives – not least so they can be cultivated and expanded upon – this activity should not be the path to a condition of denial. The rigorous, comprehensive nature of the Quality of Democracy framework forces assessors to confront a range of conclusions from good to bad.

While the General Election of May 2013 saw the momentous event of Pakistan's first successful transition from one democratic civilian Government under a civilian democratically-elected President, to another, deficiencies cannot be overlooked

General improvement in Pakistan, it seems, builds from a relatively low base. Moreover, there are aspects of democratic performance identified by the assessors as particularly weak, including standards of health among the people, economic and social rights generally, popular perceptions of corruption in the public sector, public involvement in policies at local level, the extent of decentralisation, public and legislative impact upon external policy, and outside influences on the state.

Thus while the General Election of May 2013 saw the momentous event of 'Pakistan's first successful transition from one democratic civilian Government under a civilian democratically-elected President, to another'[4] deficiencies cannot be overlooked. Moreover, history suggests it would not be wise entirely to exclude the possibility of future interruptions in the continuity of democratic, civilian administrations.With this combination of progress and uncertainty in mind, there follows a consideration of democratic transition, emphasizing those themes that may be most

2. For exploration of these issues in historic perspective, see: Andrew Blick, Beyond Magna Carta: A Constitution for the United Kingdom (Oxford, Hart, 2015 forthcoming).
3. For a recent overview, see: PILDAT, Assessment of the Quality of Democracy in First 100 Days of National and Provincial Governments: June 6 September 13, 2013 (Islamabad, PILDAT, 2013).
4. Ibid

pertinent from the perspective of Pakistan. It identifies some of the most important topics and debates in the literature, and seeks to draw some general conclusions and observations.

Historic Waves of Democratisation

Democracy is a powerful concept that has made impressive practical global progress over the past two centuries. Analysts of democratic development have identified a series of historic waves of advancement, within which it is possible to locate important moments in the development of Pakistan.[5]

The first, the longest wave to date, ran roughly from the 1820s to the 1920s. It saw countries including the United States, France, the UK and the more autonomous parts of its Empire, and other European states, make significant democratic progress. Either side of the First World War countries including Italy, Argentina, and states in Central and Eastern Europe also underwent transformations in a democratic direction.

The second wave commenced during the Second World War and ran through to the early 1960s. Uruguay, Austria, Italy, Japan, (West) Germany, Korea, Argentina, Peru, Costa Rica, Brazil, Colombia and Venezuela all formed part of this phase. A contributing factor was the shift towards independence among former colonies of European powers, including Pakistan.
A third wave is identified as beginning in Southern Europe in the mid-1970s with the removal of authoritarian regimes in Portugal, Greece and Spain and their replacement with elected administrations. The pattern then spread to Latin and Central America during the late 1970s and 1980s (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Peru, Salvador, Uruguay), with Asia following (Bangladesh, Nepal, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Taiwan). The close of a period of military rule in 1988 in Pakistan fitted into this period.

Analysts of democratic development have identified a series of historic waves of advancement, within which it is possible to locate important moments in the development of Pakistan

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, Communist systems collapsed, and the wave of change impacted in sub-Saharan Africa in the early 1990s. Transitions took place across varied locations at the end of the twentieth/beginning of the twenty-first centuries, and mid-way through the first decade of the twenty-first century, the 'coloured revolutions' occurred (Kyrgyzstan, Georgia, Ukraine, Belarus).

As this third phase of democratisation progressed, setbacks accompanied it. The early achievements in the former Soviet Union ran into difficulties, for instance in Belarus and Russia itself; and there were problems in Latin America (Venezuela and Colombia) and Africa (Zambia, Zimbabwe, Congo, Gambia) in the 1990s. Arguably, after the 'coloured revolutions' period, there was a clear period of global reversal.

Then the second decade of the twenty-first century saw another surge. Most obvious was the 'Arab spring' of 2011 (with its most notable impacts in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Syria). But there were other developments in Myanmar, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast and Georgia. It was possible that the third wave was continuing, or perhaps another wave commencing. Many of these gains, however, proved not to be secure.

Recognition of these historic patterns suggests to the observer two important aspects to democratic development. The first involves a transition away from a particular regime with pronounced undemocratic characteristics. The second, the successful entrenchment of a post-authoritarian system. Historic phases of democratic reverse have followed times of breakthrough.
The **first phase of backsliding** occurred in the 1920s and 1930s, linked to the rise of Fascism, National Socialism and Bolshevism. In the

5. For overviews drawn on to construct this account, see: Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1992); Francis Fukuyama, *Political Order and Political Decay: From the Industrial Revolution to the Globalization of Democracy* (London, Profile, 2014); Jan Teorell, *Determinants of Democratization: Explaining Regime Change in the World 1972-2006* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010).

1930s, military power seizures afflicted Uruguay, Argentina, Japan and Spain.

A **second pronounced bout of regression** had clearly come into being at the outset of the 1960s, manifesting itself in Latin America, Africa, the Mediterranean, and Asia. Pakistan had helped inaugurate this phase with the coup of 1958. This phenomenon means that it is important to give attention both to the causes of democratic gains, and the conditions conducive to the sustenance of improvements once made. The position is further complicated because not only might the first set of factors differ from the second, they may even contradict each other. For example, a financial or economic crisis may serve to undermine an authoritarian regime, but the conditions it brings about can also create problems for the administration that replaces it.

Within the historical framework sketched above, we may define Pakistan as a **democratic transition state**. It has been part both of waves of progress, and also of democratic retrenchment. Gains are possible, and many of the features of democracy, outwardly at least, may be present. However, progress is fragile. Indeed, one author places Pakistan in a group of countries oscillating between more and less democratic systems, alongside Niger, Haiti, Thailand and Turkey.[6] But what are the underlying sources both of democratisation and of resistance to it?

Socio-economic Determinants of Democratic Progress

Many analysts of democratic transition have given particular attention to the contribution of socio-economic trends towards the development or regression of democracy. Historic evidence shows that economic development can change social relations, in turn unleashing new pressures for democratisation. Some have seen the middle classes as vital both to the attainment of democratic gains and their protection.[7] They are likely to be disposed to force the sharing of political power on pre-existing elites, and can contribute to a vibrant civil society. Others regard the working classes as the critical portion of society.[8]

Economic development can enhance the power of the working classes, whose interest is in democratisation as a means of securing a more equal distribution of power and consequently resources

In such theses, economic development can enhance the power of the working classes, whose interest is in democratisation as a means of securing a more equal distribution of power and consequently resources.

An important socio-economic school proposes the importance of a range of factors grouped collectively under the heading of 'modernization'.[9] A basic point here is that there is an observable, broad connection between the wealth of a country and its democratic performance.

A further element of modernization is improved levels of education, which appear to correlate with advancements in the quality of democracy.[10] Greater income equality also appears generally to have a beneficial impact on democracy.[11] Another component of modernisation said to be supportive of democracy is the wider permeation of the media, though pre-existing freedom of expression is necessary to this advance.[12]

6. Teorell, Determinants of Democratization.
7. Barrington Moore, The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World (Boston, Beacon Press, 1966); Isobel Coleman and Terra Lawson-Remer (eds), Pathways to Freedom: Political and Economic Lessons From Democratic Transitions (New York, Council on Foreign Relations, 2013) 3.
8. Ruth Berins Collier, Paths Toward Democracy: The Working Class and Elites in Western Europe and South America (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999).
9. Seymour Martin Lipset, 'Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Legitimacy' (1959) American Political Science Review 53 (1): 1-22.
10. Edward Glaeser, Giacomo Ponzetto and Andrei Shleifer, 'Why Does Democracy Need Education?', Journal of Economic Growth (2007) 12 (7) 77-99.
11. Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006).

Separating out these different qualities and identifying the chain of causality is not a simple task. There are grounds for believing that modernisation contributes more to the entrenchment of improvements once made rather than their attainment. None of these connections, however, are absolute or apply in every case. Some countries – including India – have outperformed against expectations their 'modernisation' level might generate, while others, such as Singapore, have underachieved.

The Imperial Legacy

At times it may seem that democracy, whatever its universal implications, is more suited to some countries than others. Past paths of development are likely to impact upon future prospects. Accounts of democratic progress have often suggested that prior incorporation into a colonial empire is a hindrance to later progress.

Divide-and-rule tactics deployed by foreign occupiers can create a legacy of internal cleavage; and there may be a negative impact on economic advancement. However, it may be that in many cases the period of occupation was not sufficiently long to make a lasting impact upon democratic propensity. [13]

Furthermore, some analysis differentiates between empires, and suggests in particular that the British Empire was more effective at spreading a propensity for democracy.[14] The central plank of the argument in favour of the British Empire in this respect (excluding Australia, Canada, and New Zealand) is **India**.

Over the period of India's existence as an independent state, despite some problematic periods, especially in the mid-1970s, freely contested elections have taken place regularly and power has changed hands, which is a crucial, if not entirely sufficient requirement of democracy.

It is important to avoid presenting an overly optimistic portrait. An application of the more nuanced modes of democratic measurement advocated here reveals a complex picture. There are serious variations of performance across different Indian states, and clear flaws exist, particularly in the socio-economic arena.

Nonetheless, India certainly requires much explanation from the point of view of standard interpretations of democratization.[15] Its level of economic development, its vast population size, its ethnic and religious diversity, its aforementioned colonial status, do not, on the surface, suggest a good prognosis from the point of view of many conventional accounts of democratic propensity.

The Muslim League may have been less conducive to democratic development in what became Pakistan because majority of its members were part of the landed elite, who were less disposed to promote 'bourgeois' values

If the previous incorporation into the British Empire was the reason for subsequent Indian achievements, why did it not work in the same way elsewhere – including in Pakistan? It could be that rather than being a direct beneficiary of British colonialism, India acquired democratic characteristics that had roots in UK political theory and practice *despite* rather than *because of* the British rulers. A possible long-term reason for Indian success lies in the pre-independence nationalist movement and its emphasis on the need to create a federal, secular system with full voting rights. In such theories, the Muslim League may have been less conducive to democratic development in what became Pakistan because majority of its members were part of the landed elite, who were less disposed to promote 'bourgeois' values.

In the post-independence period in India, wide support for the Congress Party and the existence of an efficient civil service were probably helpful factors from the perspective of the consolidation of democratic gains. The role of Congress as – at least in theory – representing the whole of India rather than a particular group may have been

12. Teorell, *Determinants of Democratization*.
13. Ibid
14. Michael Bernard, Christopher Reenock and Timothy Nordstrom, 'The Legacy of Western Overseas Colonialism on Democratic Survival', *International Studies Quarterly* (2004) 48 225-50.
15. See eg: Atul Kohli (ed) *The Success of India's Democracy* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001).

beneficial. The Constitution of India is seen as an institutional strength, with amendments to it over time ensuring that it continues to further democratic objectives.

Some accounts emphasize the achievement of Indian democracy in balancing the privileged and the underprivileged groups, and in splitting power between federal and more localised authority. It may be that continuing to maintain equilibrium, particularly between the Hindus and other religious groups, is the major challenge to Indian democracy in the future.

Religion and Democracy

For many years it seemed as though democracy was largely associated with North Western Europe, and colonies in which settlers from this region became predominant. The second and third historic waves of democratization undermined this outlook.

Another interpretation of democracy has been that certain religious dispositions may either facilitate or prohibit democratization. Initially, for some, only Protestantism was compatible with democracy. The third wave included within it many mainly Catholic countries. Confucianism has been another belief system held to be inherently resistant to democracy. Yet progress in Taiwan and the Republic of Korea (South Korea) from the late 1980s called this view into question. A further religion singled out as creating a barrier to democracy is Islam.

An international analysis of democratic performance might suggest that predominantly Muslim countries are at a democratic disadvantage. Some note that it creates a problematic barrier to the separation of political from religious authority. Others associate it with an underprivileged social position for women. It is observed that democracy has lacked enthusiastic advocacy from political leaders in predominantly Muslim countries. Liberalization of electoral politics can lead to voters supporting Islamic parties that are themselves hostile to democracy. In Turkey, where secularisation was attained after the First World War, other democratic problems, including a politically interventionist army, appeared.

Yet opinion research suggests that Muslims internationally are as disposed towards key features of democracy as any other group. Moreover, it may be that the problems faced by Arab countries in the Middle East and North Africa, probably related to oil and other resources, serve to distort the overall sample of majority Muslim states.[16]

However, if it is accepted that Islam can create a barrier to democracy, it does not mean it is insuperable or must always be so. The relative importance of religion can change at different times. Nationalism was a more prominent force than Islam in the Arab world in the mid-twentieth century. Furthermore, the orientation of religions can modify. For instance, during the 1970s, Catholicism, having shifted from its past tendency to be hostile towards democracy, took on a more supportive role, underpinning the historic third wave.

A predominantly Muslim country that has been a site of democratic progress in recent years is **Indonesia**. It is, like Pakistan and India, a former European colony that obtained independence during second wave of democratization (i.e., in 1949). It had been part of the Dutch Empire and – according to some theories – was therefore less democratically advantaged than Pakistan as a former territory of the British Empire.

It shares with Pakistan a predominantly Muslim population, and is a geographically disparate polity, scattered across numerous islands. On population measures it is the fourth largest country in the world; and it has a Presidential system. Therefore, according to some of the general evidence and interpretations discussed above, it has many democratic disadvantages. In

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16. Alfred Stepan with Graeme Robertson, 'Arab, not Muslim, Exceptionalism', *Journal of Democracy* 15 (4) 140-46.

Democratic reform is a long-term project. In Europe, for example, even the initial stages proved agonisingly prolonged and fragile. However, short- to medium-term setbacks or difficulties do not equate to absolute defeat

this sense it has outperformed in recent times. A process beginning with the Asian economic crisis of 1997 led to a transition to a more democratic system, with the role of the army increasingly restrained.

The achievements in Indonesia rest on a range of plausible causes.[17] The legacy of the long post-independence phase of authoritarian Government, though clearly not wholly benign, is significant. It included secularism and the promotion of the Indonesian language, breaking with regional and hierarchical differences.

Indonesia had also presented the outward semblance of a multi-party electoral system that could provide an embryo for later advances. A long period of economic development preceded 1997. Religious leaders played an important role in promoting moderate engagement, not least Mr. Abdurrahman Wahid, the President from 1999-2001, who accepted the principle of secularism.

Popular engagement in the early period of transition and the role of the media prompted wider ownership of the reform process. Online social media have facilitated activism. Over the first decade of the twenty-first century, Governments pursued policies of greater financial transparency and welfare programmes, and achieved higher levels of economic growth. Economic inequality resultantly lessened. Political decentralization has taken place and the society has become ethnically and politically more inclusive.

Specific achievements in changing the role of the Military included separating it organizationally from the police force and providing financial incentives for the Military to accept a reduction in its size and the scope of its influence. Yet problems remain, including the prospect of religious extremism.

Democratic Reform in the Context of the United Kingdom

Democratic reform is a long-term project. In Europe, for example, even the initial stages proved agonisingly prolonged and fragile. However, short- to medium-term setbacks or difficulties do not equate to absolute defeat. Those who seek to advance democracy must prioritise strategic gains. Short cuts, such as violent coup attempts, may generate more problems than they solve, while peaceful protest can achieve wider and more sustained momentum towards change.

Problems that may appear insuperable to democratic principle can eventually be overcome. Such developments may take place in unexpected ways. To illustrate the point, it is useful to return to the case of the UK.

Some of the core values that underpin its system of Government are derived from before the formation of the UK as a single state, when it existed in separate national components. A crucial period in this development was the seventeenth century.[18] In this era there were sustained clashes involving religion and ethnicity. Regional conflict on the European continental mainland had disruptive consequences for the British Isles. There were also clashes between two different models of Government: **arbitrary monarchical rule** on the one hand, and **limited executive power**, based on consultation and respect for individual freedoms on the other.

The differences must have seemed at times irreconcilable, and eventually led to a civil war and two revolutions. There were periods of firm Governmental oppression, breakdowns in public authority, and human suffering. In the middle of the seventeenth century, the army became an increasingly important political player in its own right, and eventually seized power for itself, for a time ruling without Parliament. During another period of chaos, a Dutch invasion led by William

17. See: Joshua Kurlantzick, 'Indonesia' in Coleman and Lawson-Remer (eds), *Pathways to Freedom*.
18. See: Jonathan Scott, *England's Troubles: Seventeenth-Century English Political Instability in European Context* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000).

of Orange forced James II off the throne in 1688.

Yet out of this very division and disarray certain principles, that would later contribute to the emergence of democracy in the UK and beyond, took shape. Most importantly, following the flight of James II, a body known as the 'Convention Parliament' sat to consider the future of England. One of its products was the Bill of Rights of 1689, a document intended to oblige future rulers to adhere to a set of norms regarding individual freedoms, the impartiality of the legal system, free elections, and the independence of Parliament.

Both the Convention and the Bill of Rights would shape the constitutional future of the UK and inspire similar efforts internationally. Full democracy was still more than two centuries away. But the experience of the seventeenth century shows that out of turmoil and seemingly hopeless divisions can come a basis for progress.

This realization should give cause for optimism. But it is no basis for quietism. This pattern should, instead, inspire immediate action guided by an awareness of the wider historic panorama. The struggle for progress is difficult but the potential rewards are great.

Conclusions and Observations

Building on the foregoing discussion, as series of conclusions and observations are possible. Acknowledgement of wider global waves of democratisation, and of the importance of the past to future patterns of development, is necessary. But it should not lead to a sense of pre-determination or powerlessness. Individual and group initiatives can influence democratic development for the better (and worse).[19]

Some suggestions regarding possible areas of action follow. They are focused in particular on the idea of protecting and enhancing democratic gains once made.

i. Attention to **socio-economic development** is crucial. Economic growth is linked to the emergence of social groups with an interest in democracy, and can create an association between democratic progress and enhanced living standards. Alongside economic expansion, the promotion of **improved social welfare** and **greater income equality** is necessary. Improvements in **educational standards** would also seem to have particular value. Expansion of **free media** is to be encouraged.

ii. Procedures and practices associated with democracy, such as **multi-party elections**, even if not functioning entirely satisfactory, can, in the longer-term, help develop popular attachment to the democratic concept, and trigger unforeseen democratic improvements in future. Measures intended to promote the development of viable governing and opposition parties, **based around policy programmes more than personalities** or direct relations with client groups, should be a priority.[20]

iii. A number of options exist for reducing any negative democratic impact emanating from the armed forces. A recent work by the academic and former Spanish Defence Minister, Mr. Narcis Serra, provides useful guidance here. The Legislature and the Government, he argues, should maintain a close interest in changes and develop a body of expertise. Serra stresses that any meaningful reform is dependent upon a wider social context of democratisation, and must involve continuous effort over a sustained period of time rather than a short spell of forced change. The senior Defence Minister, he holds, should be a powerful figure, and a civilian. Different branches of the armed forces should become properly coordinated. Another necessary area of reform Serra identifies is military justice that

Measures intended to promote the development of viable governing and opposition parties, based around policy programmes more than personalities or direct relations with client groups, should be a priority

19. For a work including this philosophy, see eg: Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe Schmitter and Laurence Whitehead (eds), *Transition from Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for Democracy* (Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, 1986).
20. See: Nic Cheeseman et al., *Politics Meets Policies: The Emergence of Programmatic Political Parties* (Stockholm, International IDEA, 2014).

Every state has a different combination of democratic strengths and weaknesses, and the particular path it should follow towards improvement and consolidation must be its own

must cease to be a means of ensuring impunity. If the military has an intelligence branch focused on domestic affairs, then interference in internal democracy is hard to avoid. **The overall process of reform should as far as possible involve the Military itself**.[21]

iv. There is a clear connection between the position of the Military in Pakistani society and the relationship with India. An effort at **reducing tensions between these neighbours** could contribute to a democratization of the role of the armed forces, as well as help create the type of hospitable regional environment that is conducive to democratic development.

v. Specific reforms, such as changes to the Constitutional text, can have a positive democratic impact. But their execution must take into account the wider environment within which they are expected to operate. Attention to the proper consideration and sequencing of change is therefore vital.[22] For instance, the **devolution of power** under a Federal or Quasi-federal system can bring democracy closer to citizens. But its effectiveness depends partly on the capacity of the institutions wielding newly dispersed powers properly to perform their new responsibilities. The downward transfer of powers to areas dominated by one particular group at the cost of minorities is another potential problem to take into account. Similarly, reforms intended to stimulate economic activity, if they involve the transfer of previously publicly owned holdings into the private sector, require caution. If sufficient development in the **rule of law** has not taken place in advance of such initiatives, it may entrench the position of economic-political elites able to subvert democratic processes, as occurred in post-Soviet Ukraine.

vi. Every state has a different combination of democratic strengths and weaknesses, and the particular path it should follow towards improvement and consolidation must be its own. There is no single prescription. However, an important feature underlying any democratic success is the **development of a democratic culture**. Components of democracy must be seen as collectively owned. The rule of law, for instance, entails an impartial system of justice and protection from arbitrary treatment for all, and is more than simply the property of lawyers. Equally crucial is group commitment at elite level to an environment conducive to post-election power transitions. Those required to leave office must be willing to accept this outcome, and must have reason for confidence that those replacing them will behave properly towards them.

21. Narcis Serra, *The Military Transition: Democratic Reform of the Armed Forces* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010).
22. See eg: Coleman and Lawson-Remer (eds), *Pathways to Freedom*.

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